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## House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
May 12, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVE WOMACK to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

### GROWING U.S. NATIONAL DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, last week, while we were in recess, I traveled through my district and had the opportunity to appear on local television and to speak at civic clubs. Every time I mentioned that we have an \$18 trillion debt, eastern North Carolinians were astounded and could not believe it.

To put the debt into perspective, on January 20, 2009, the total Federal debt stood at \$10.6 trillion. As of last Fri-

day, May 8, 2015, it has risen to \$18—an increase of \$7.5 trillion. Our debt now stands at over \$200,000 for every full-time private sector worker. I agree with my constituents that it is time Congress stopped passing legislation that is not paid for.

Republicans have control of both Chambers of Congress now because voters want us to cut the debt and deficit and stop passing legislation that is not paid for.

In an April article for Forbes Magazine, Stan Collender wrote:

If you haven't noticed that Congress is about to increase the Federal deficit substantially, you haven't been watching carefully . . . or at all. Virtually every policy change that has already or soon will be considered seriously in the House and Senate will make the deficit higher rather than lower.

He further writes:

Based on what Congress is now considering, the deficit could be \$100 billion or more next year than it otherwise would be if you just put Washington on autopilot; that is, if you made no changes to existing tax and spending policies. That would be an almost 21 percent increase.

It is obvious that our current fiscal policies are unsustainable.

Mr. Speaker, I have been speaking for months and even years about the waste of money in Afghanistan. It is sad to me that we have been pouring money down a rat hole known as Afghanistan.

We have spent over \$685 billion in Afghanistan in the last 14 years, and President Obama just entered into a bilateral security agreement with Afghanistan late last year that ties us—our Nation—to a failed policy for another 9 years.

What have we gained there, with over 2,000 American troops killed, over 20,000 wounded, and billions of dollars spent? My answer to my own question is: nothing. Absolutely nothing.

A couple of weeks ago, I visited Walter Reed Army Medical Center to meet some of our veterans who had been

wounded and are trying to heal. Some have wounds that will never truly heal.

Congress owes it to them—and all of our men and women who serve—and the American taxpayer to have a serious debate about our future in Afghanistan. I think it is high time to leave Afghanistan. Nine more years is absolutely fruitless.

Mr. Speaker, out of fairness to American taxpayers and future generations, we can no longer delay the need to pay down our debt and work toward sound economic policies. And out of fairness to our veterans and the men and women who serve in the military, we need to have a serious debate about spending more money and time in Afghanistan, when it has been proven and is well known by historians to be the graveyard of empires. Is it worth it, Mr. Speaker? I think not.

May God continue to bless our men and women in uniform and may God continue to bless America.

### TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFazio) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFazio. Mr. Speaker, as I rise on the floor of the House, the Senate is about to begin debate on trade promotion authority, which is Congress ceding all authority to the President to negotiate agreements secretly, bring them before these bodies, and to say take it or leave it, an “up-or-down” vote, no amendments—ceding our constitutional authority. I hope the Senate turns him down.

Now, the President went to Oregon last week, to Nike, who originated the idea of chasing cheap labor around the world and outsourcing U.S. production. He gave a speech. I wasn't invited. That was fine with me. He went there to make fun of people like me who have fought these trade agreements for more than 20 years and have been more

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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